

Rediscovery



Pico Adobe Restoration



*Mexican President Vicente Fox with Latino Caucus members, March 2001
Courtesy Office of the Governor of California*



Harriet Strong at Pico Adobe in Whittier

Rediscovery of Pio Pico's role in California history is closely linked to the rebirth of participation of Latinos in California government. Pico's house in Whittier was the focus of early rediscovery efforts. Harriet Strong, a friend and former neighbor of Pio Pico, created the Governor Pico Mansion Society to raise money and repair the crumbling adobe building. In 1917, it became part of the State of California, an early historic monument that would become part of the California State Park system. Over the next 70 years, the Pio Pico State Historic Park became a regional landmark providing a quiet oasis amid a growing urban environment. It has served many school children who come to learn about California history. An earthquake in 1987 damaged the adobe home, and visitors could no longer enter the building. Completion of the Pio Pico State Historic Park Restoration Project will provide visitors with new opportunities to rediscover Pio Pico. New research has brought a more complete understanding of the major role Pio Pico played in California History.



*Mexican President Vicente Fox with Senator Richard Polanco, Chair Latino Caucus and Governor Davis, March 2001
Courtesy Office of the Governor of California*

The growing number of Latinos in California Government parallels the renewed interest in Pio Pico. The increased Latino population, Legislative term limits and controversial initiative issues have spurred a dramatic increase in Latinos in state government. California's recent establishment of stronger ties with Mexico has also helped to focus attention on Latino history, cultural and political activism.